

# Postcards from Iraq

## Making happy memories for Baghdad's children

I am a member of the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team, or PRT, a multi-agency unit run by the Department of State that includes Soldiers from the 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion Bravo Co, Bi-Lingual Bi-Cultural Advisors, and local national employees.

The Baghdad PRT recently provided seven local youth sports clubs with much needed equipment and uniforms. The distribution of 21 soccer nets, 500 balls, 21 whistles and enough uniforms for 500 players took place at the Karkh Sports Club in central Baghdad. Each player received home and away game uniforms, practice

and game shoes, socks, shin guards and a warm up suit.

Up to now, the clubs couldn't afford uniforms so players wore whatever clothes they had at home. "Thank you for this help," said Coach Ali Abd Zarah from the Football Academy in Sadr City. "This will do so much for our team spirit and self-respect. It will help us to bring more of our young people to the teams."

Another highlight of the event for me was giving out beanie babies provided by a church in New Hampshire. Children from a local school came and each of them picked out a stuffed animal. The children were so



excited and very appreciative. It is a good example of how we are building relationships and winning hearts and minds. I think it is really important to have a positive, supportive presence with the kids. They will have these memories throughout their childhood and hopefully look back on them fondly in adulthood. This is why we are here.

*SGT Angel Storm  
Baghdad Provincial  
Reconstruction Team*

*Above: Baghdad school children were happy to receive the donated stuffed animals. Above right and top right: Me and Zahala.*